The KINSMEN CONCERT SERIES

1950-51 Season

presents

The Leslie Bell Singers

Direction: DR. LESLIE R. BELL

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1950—8.15 p.m.
at the CAPITOL THEATRE, SASKATOON

Western Canada Tour Direction: Celebrity Concerts (Canada) Limited
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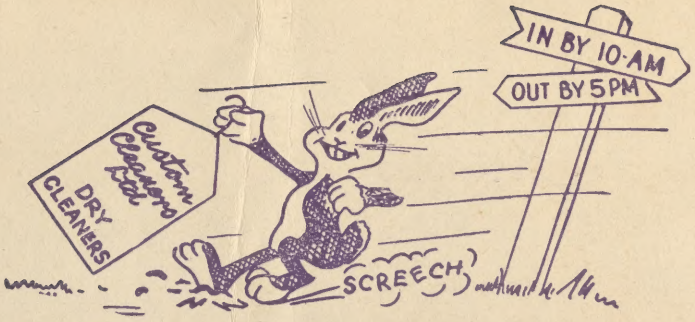

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Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra

1950-51 CONCERT SEASON

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ULLIVAN

Dr. Leslie Bell

Arranger . . . . Conductor

LESLIE BELL, the arranger, was born shortly after Leslie Bell, the choral director, formed his all-girl choir in 1939 and discovered that suitable arrangements were practically non-existent. Composers of the last three centuries had written music for singers and orchestra; a great deal of the music of earlier centuries had been arranged for resounding choirs of mixed voices. Undaunted, Dr. Leslie Bell scored his own music—tailored to measure his girls' voices. Today, his arrangements of music by the masters, folk songs of many countries, and semi-popular music share equal honors among music lovers, with his expertly trained chorus. In fact, thousands of choral singers in England, Australia, and the United States, who have never heard the Leslie Bell Singers, are thoroughly familiar with the credit line, "Arrangement by Leslie Bell." With Howard Cable, Dr. Leslie Bell is also responsible for the arrangements which blend the voices of his incomparable singers with Cable's string and woodwind orchestra each Sunday evening on the Canadian General Electric program which is now receiving unanimous acclaim as "radio's finest half-hour

..... *Brahms*

g ..... *Bell*

si

girl . . . out a feat . . . it

low-register voices that he has trained to give his arrangements the effect of a mixed choir. So dynamic is the impression that a leading Canadian newspaper wrote after one of the Leslie Bell Singers' concerts: "A demonstration of choral virtuosity such as has been seldom achieved; as highly specialized vocalists their success is unequalled." It is often said that "music hath charms," but by all reports, the music of the Leslie Bell Singers not only charms—it hypnotizes. Evidence for this statement is found in the critics' reports of the appearance of the Bell Singers at a recent Toronto Symphony Orchestra "Pop" Concert. For example, the "Toronto Evening Telegram" had this to say: "The Leslie Bell Singers delighted the great audience, and mystified it, too. They made music as strangely sweet and mystical—so changeful and unlike anything else in song or instrumental ensemble *that listeners forgot to applaud!*" Reassuringly, the "Telegram" adds: "The noise of hand-clapping, when it *did* come, seemed positively brutal. It seemed as though the singers had power to do anything they wished with those who heard them sing." Another type of tribute paid to the Bell Singers was one by the Governor-General, Viscount Alexander. When the girls were singing in Ottawa, the Governor-General came up after the performance and asked if he might have his picture taken with the choir. A frantic scurrying ensued, but as fate would have it there was no photographer to be found. Mayor Camillien Houde, of Montreal, took no such chance. When the Bell Singers appeared in Montreal, the Mayor arrived with his own battery of photographers, and the flash bulbs popped for several minutes while he posed with the attractive group.

R. LESLIE R. BELL

O SAVE THE KING

I

SANCTUS	*Palestrina*
CLAIRE DE LUNE	*Debussy*
HEBRIDEAN SUITE	*Kennedy-Fraser*
To People Who Have Gardens Eriskay Love Lilt A Road to the Isles	
ECHO SONG	*Di Lasso*
ROCK-A MA SOUL	*Spiritual*

INTERMISSION

THE LESLIE BELL SINGERS and the *A Capella* TRADITION

It is generally conceded that choral writing and performance reached its height in the 15th and 16th centuries. One reason for its supremacy was the fact that the music of the period was meant to be sung *"a capella,"* that is, to say, "without accompaniment." Despite the magnificent work of Handel, Bach, and the later masters, something was lost to choral art when, with the rise of instrumental music, the old tradition was replaced by the practice of accompanied singing, for choralism can best realize its fullest achievement in a capella performance. The qualities that make for perfect singing—fine tonal balance, accurate intonation, and flawless diction—these are more surely realized when the singers are "on their own." Many present-day choirs, appreciating this fact, have endeavored to revive the a capella tradition, but in doing so, they have found themselves handicapped.

Since the fashion has been for the last three centuries to write almost exclusively for voices with accompaniment, such groups are forced to confine their activities to the works of the early masters, or to some specialized field such as that of Russian church music or the negro spiritual ☆ The Bell Singers have endeavored to retain the tradition of unaccompanied singing, and at the same time to explore all fields of music. To make this possible, it has been necessary for their directors to re-arrange music of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries in a capella style, and to venture also into the field of transcription, *i.e.*, the re-adaptation of instrumental music for vocal performance. In this last connection, the question has sometimes been asked, "Why attempt to sing instrumental compositions when there is so much fine, legitimate choral music available?', One might best answer this objection by quoting the eminent English music historian and critic, Cecil Gray, who has said, "The substance of the thought will remain unchanged in translation. It is probably safe to say that nine-tenths of the world's greatest music could be transcribed for any medium within reason without losing more than a comparatively unimportant part of its substance and appeal, and that, generally speaking, the greater the work, the less it will lose."

II

MEDLEY FROM GILBERT AND SULLIVAN

TWO SONGS FROM THE WEST
Red River Valley
Country Style

CRADLE SONG ..... *Brahms*

FANTASY ON NURSERY RHYMES ..... *Bell*

INTERMISSION

III

MEDLEY FROM IRVING BERLIN

I'LL TAKE YOU HOME AGAIN, KATHLEEN ..... *Irish*

TWO FRENCH SONGS
Youpe, Youpe, sur la Riviere
Le Fiacre

SONGS FROM THE GAY NINETIES ..... *Bell*

* * *

Musical arrangements and direction by Leslie Bell, M.A., Mus.D.

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VERA ELLEN

OCTOBER 13-17
THRILLING ENTERTAINMENT
"UNION STATION"
from *The Saturday Evening Post* novel
Starring
WM. HOLDEN BARRY FITZGERALD
NANCY OLSON

OCTOBER 18-21
"NO WAY OUT"
RICHARD WIDMARK LINDA DARNELL

OCTOBER 23-25
"DARK CITY"
CHARLTON HESTON LIZABETH SCOTT

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